

Friendly Advice

K. Scotland - Episcopal Church - Clergy.

TO THE

Clergy of SCOTLAND,

In a LETTER from a sincere Well-Wisher of the Church of CHRIST in Scotland by Law establish'd,

TO

A Minister of the Gospel at Edinburgh.

REVEREND SIR,

YOU may perhaps take it unkindly, that I have so long delayed giving you an Answer to your last; I was so surprized with the warm Alarm you gave me, that ever since (as one awaked out of a Dream) I have been endeavouring to compose my self, and to find out the Grounds of this Outcry.

In the Beginning of your Letter you tell me, That some People talk, with great Freedom, our Establishment in Church and State is in Danger; the Pretender is to be brought over upon us; and our Enemies Abroad are strengthened and encouraged by our Divisions at Home.

At first I was so surprized with this dismal Story, that I expected every other Line of your Letter was to inform me of the Queen's Death, some Total Rout of our Armies, or some Formidable Descent upon our Coasts.

But I was no less surprized, when, toward the Close of your Letter, you tell me, All the Ground you had for these Apprehensions, was, That the Queen intended to dissolve the Parliament, and to make some Alteration in the Ministry: Touching all which, you desire my Thoughts.

The Opinion I have of your good Sense put me a little to a Stand, Whether or not it was the Sovereign's Prerogative to dissolve a Parliament or alter a Ministry? But certainly, Sir, She can do both; and therefore I suppose the Question will be, Whether or not, in Point of Expediency, she may do either at this Time? and Whether or not another Session of this Parliament (which is all it can have by Law) and this Set of Ministry is the only Safeguard we have for protecting our Establishment and Liberties, and for opposing the Pretender?

As to this, Sir, I shall give you my humble Opinion in a very few Words, and first in general.

A Parliament (as I think) is the Grand Council of the Nation, sent by the People to give their Opinion and Assistance in Publick Affairs; and a Ministry is the Privy-Council of the Sovereign, assumed by Her Self to assist Her in Her own Administration of these Affairs.

As it is the Happiness of our Constitution to have the true Sense of the Nation represented in Parliament ; so it is the Misfortune of our Constitution, that sometimes a Ministry have found Means to form Factions to their own Ends, by which they have been able to over-rule the Faculties of the Sovereign, and to corrupt the Representative of the People.

A Faction cannot come to Maturity in one Season ; a Sovereign is not to be insulted, nor a Parliament corrupted at once ; a designing Ministry must have some Time for associating to themselves a sufficient Party to strengthen them in so bold Attempts ; and no Expedient seems more Natural for preventing these Mischiefs, as frequent Dissolutions of Parliaments, and frequent Changes of Ministers.

The Wisdom of the Nation has in some Measure taken Care of the First by the Triennial Act ; and if the Wisdom and Goodness of the Sovereign shall think fit sometimes to gratify us with the other, we have more Reason of Thanks than of Grumbling.

As the Wisdom of the Nation has by that Triennial Act confined the Duration of a Parliament to Three Years at most ; so the Practice of our late Glorious Deliverer, upon the Death of the last King of Spain, has establish'd a Precedent for dissolving Parliaments within that Time.

That was a Dutiful Parliament as well as this, and had shown as great Regard to our Sovereign and Establishment as this or any other Parliament can do ; but with this Variation of Circumstances, That at that Time, the proper Season of Down-sitting of Parliaments was postponed full 3 Months by that Dissolution ; whereas it will not be postponed at all, if this Parliament is now dissolved.

At that Time we had no Army in Being, neither could we raise any without a Parliament ; we have now a Powerful Army in the Field, well Disciplin'd and Victorious.

At that Time the French were expelling all our Allies Garrisons out of the Frontier-Towns, and were Garrisoning them with their own Troops ; at present we are Masters of all these Frontiers, and are driving our Conquests into their Territories.

At that Time the Duke of Anjou was preparing his Equipage to march into Spain, and before our Parliament met he had actually entered in the peaceable Possession of that Kingdom, which has since been the Ground of all this expensive War ; at present the Armies we design shall drive him thence are on Foot, and a new Parliament may come time enough to lay on the next Year's Funds.

At that Time our Church-Establishment was only secured by an Act of Parliament, whereas now by the Fundamental Settlement of the Union, it is beyond the Reach of all its Enemies ; as you might have heard it very strenuously argued in the Union Parliament, by one who pretends to be a very Zealous Patriot of our Church, to whose Authority I appeal : You will find him at Edinburgb now in Time of Session.

In a Word, the dismal Prospect of these Times seem'd to call for the immediate Meeting of that Parliament, even suppose it had been as backward as it was dutiful ; and yet our Glorious Deliverer was so desirous to know the more immediate Sense of the Nation (as his own Proclamation express'd it) that the Parliament was dissolved amidst all these Difficulties.

I leave you and all the World to judge, Sir, whether the Circumstances of that Juncture, or of this, could best admit of a New Parliament ; and yet

I do not remember to have heard any Subject at that Time so Undutiful as to say, That Dissolution would endanger our Constitution, or bring over Foreign Pretenders upon us.

There is one Observe, Sir, which I cannot pass over, and which I earnestly recommend to your Consideration, That these very People who now murmur against the intended Dissolution of Parliament, are the same who behind the Curtain advised the Dissolution I now speak of.

This, Sir, is my humble Opinion in general, with regard to the Queen's Prerogative or Prudence in Dissolving Parliaments, or altering Ministers: And it seems a most Undutiful (if not Mutinous) Construction upon the Queen's Actions to say, That the free Exercise of Her unquestion'd Prerogative, will endanger the Constitution; and that the Queen's Prudence, in securing the Peace of Her Government at Home, against the overgrown Power of a Faction, will encourage a Foreign Enemy, or invite a Pretender.

But, perhaps, you will expect I should say something in particular, as to the Temper of this current Parliament and present Ministry, who have (as you say) a great Interest in this Parliament, are most dexterous Managers of the Revenue, the only Patriots of our Liberties, and the only Supports of the Revolution Settlement.

Sir, It has always been my Maxim, That Subjects in their private Capacities should Reverence and Trust whatever Persons the Sovereign shall think fit to employ.

But since you have named to me a particular Set of Men in *North-Britain*, who at this Time make the Outcry in behalf of the present Ministry; I shall recommend to you some Questions to be asked of these Gentlemen.

Whether or not, an eminent Lawier, who is likewise a Man of Quality, and at present sets up high for supporting the angry Party, did in the Convention strenuously oppose the Revolution, and was afterwards one of the most forward Managers of that Clubb which set up to defeat the present Settlement, and continued so, until he was taken off by the Favours of the Government?

What is the Opinion of these Gentlemen, touching some Addresses which were carrying on in last Session of Parliament by some of the present Ministry and the *English Juncto*, for removing some of Her Majesty's most Faithful Domesticks; for no other Reason, but because they had recommended a very deserving Gentleman to a Regiment, which some of the Ministry had designed for another?

Whether or not, they think that this Address, with some other Matters of that kind, was the highest Indignity that could be put upon a Sovereign, and a plain Insult upon Her Prerogative?

What are their Sentiments of the Principles and Morals of that *English Juncto*? And what sort of Patriots they will be for the Church of *Scotland*, or any other Christian Church whatsoever?

Whether or not, they themselves, in Conjunction with the *English Juncto*, not long ago, have exclaimed against some eminent Men in the present Ministry, as protracting the War for their own private Ends?

Whether or not, they themselves do believe, that the *English Juncto* have on several Occasions made pretended Appearances for the Liberties of the Nation, in Opposition to the present Ministry; and have let fall their Opposition when the present Ministry had gratifyed them with Places and Pensions?

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Whether or not, they themselves have exclaimed against the *English Juncto* and present Ministry for smothering the Inquiry into the Causes of the Misfortune at *Almanza*, and several Imbazlements of the Revenue?

Whether or not, they themselves have exclaimed against the *English Juncto* and present Ministry, as Enemies to our Liberties, on many Occasions, particularly in throwing out that Amendment to the last Treason-Bill; by which Persons indicted were to have a List of the Witnesses given them, with a Copy of the Indictment some Days before their Trial?

In my humble Opinion, Sir, this is sufficient to stop the Mouths of some Gentlemen amongst our selves, who have so often exclaimed against the *English Juncto* and present Ministry, and now give the Alarm, that all is lost, if this Parliament is dissolved, and this *Juncto* and Ministry is altered.

I think, Sir, I need not explain this Way of doing Business, I leave you to judge who will be the Authors of any Divisions or Disorders, if any such happen at this time, and what Sincerity can be in these Men who make this Outcry.

I cannot avoid thinking, they have made their Party, with that *Juncto* and Ministry; and, believing the Government and Nation weary of them, they design by their extravagant Amusements to throw all Things loose, thereby to force the Sovereign to depend upon a Set of Men, with whom they expect to Share the Plunder.

So that now, Sir, to be plain with you, I do not see any fair State of a Question, with respect to the present Juncture, but this; WHETHER THE QUEEN AND HER PARLIAMENT ARE TO BE GOVERNED BY THESE GENTLEMEN, OR THESE GENTLEMEN AND THEIR FELLOW SUBJECTS ARE TO BE GOVERNED BY THE QUEEN AND PARLIAMENT?

Sir, let me beg of you to reflect, How, on former Occasions, we have been made Tools to raise Factious Men to Places of Trust, who have very ill rewarded us for it.

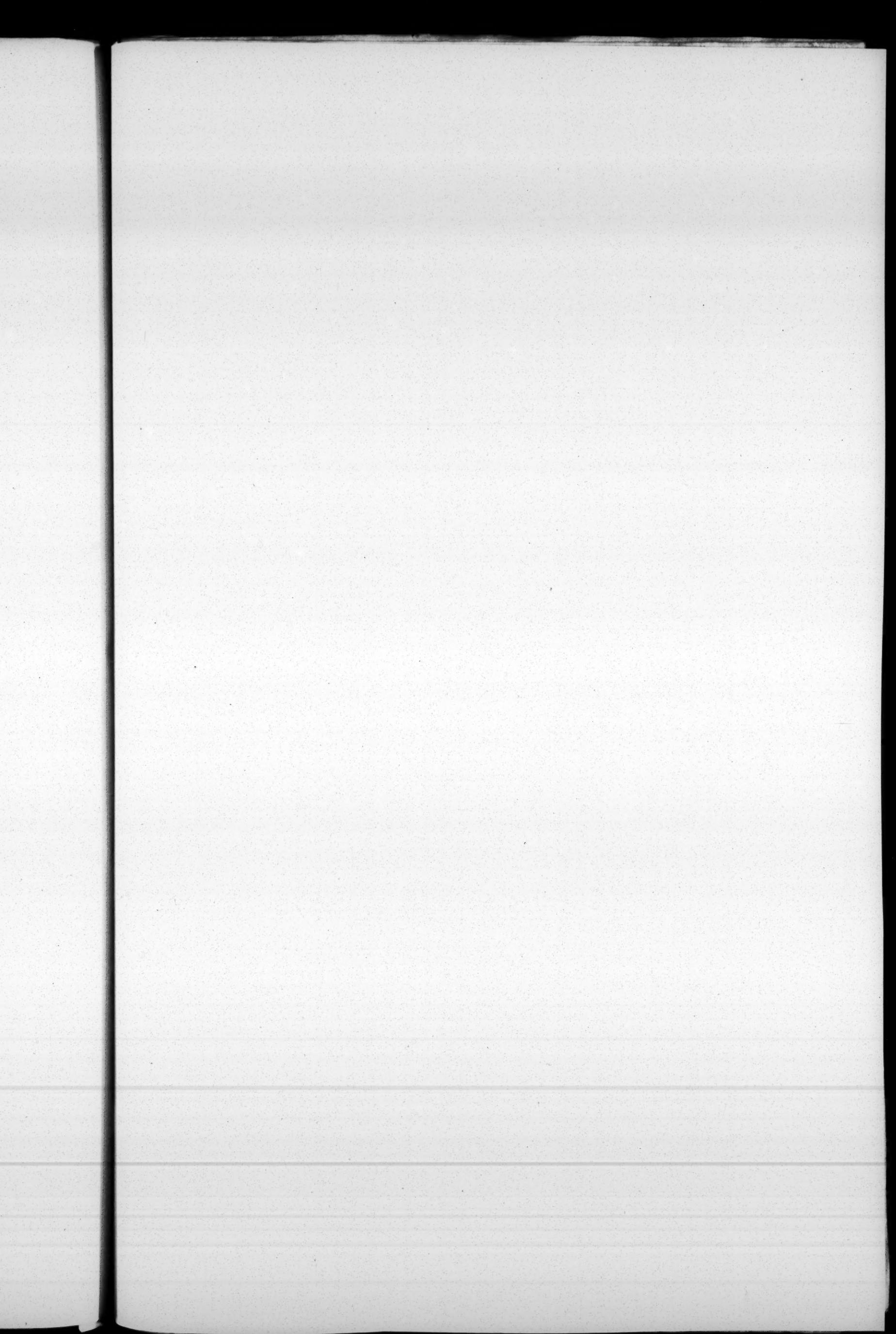
You and all your Brethren have very dutifullly owned and most heartily prayed for our gracious Sovereign; give not our Enemies Ground to reproach us, as if we were juggling with God Almighty, and to say that a few designing Men about her were the Object of our Prayers and not her self.

These who invite us to complain without a Cause, may perhaps find us Ground of Complaint, if we hearken to them. And believe me, Sir, the best Way to engage and enable the Queen to preserve our Liberty and Property, is not to medle with her's.

EDINBURGH:

Printed by *James Watson*, on the North-side of the Cross in *Craig's Clofs*; and Sold at his Shop, next Door to the *Red-Lyon* opposite to the *Lucken-booths*. 1710.





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